

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
2nd Session

Vote No. 211

July 19, 1996, 11:29 am
Page S-8335 Temp. Record

WELFARE REFORM RECONCILIATION/Welfare for Immigrantss

SUBJECT: Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996 . . . S. 1956. Domenici motion to table the Graham amendment No. 4921.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 62-34

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1956, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996, will enact major welfare reforms. The Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program will be replaced with a new Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant to the States. The TANF block grant will be capped through 2001. Time limits will be placed on individuals receiving TANF benefits. Overall, the growth in non-Medicaid welfare spending will be slowed to 4.3 percent annually. The bill originally included major Medicaid reforms, but most of those provisions were stricken when the bill was reported. Without those Medicaid reforms, welfare spending will still be reduced by \$61.4 billion over 6 years.

The Graham amendment would strike sections that will restrict legal immigrants' eligibility to receive Federal welfare benefits.

Following debate, Senator Domenici moved to table the Graham amendment. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the amendment; those opposing the motion to table favored the amendment.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

The Graham amendment would replot old ground. The Senate has already debated these provisions on two prior occasions, and they were considered again by the Finance Committee in putting together this bill. Further, most of these provisions have been included in the various Democratic alternative proposals that have been made for welfare reform. There is very broad agreement in both parties that America should be the land of opportunity, not the land of handouts. The basic premise remains the same--people who come to this country should work, not go on welfare, and if they do need help, the people they should turn to first should be their sponsors who promised that at no time would they become public charges. Sponsors who sign affidavits of support should be made to live by those affidavits. They should not be allowed, in effect, to lie, and make the taxpayers pick up the bill. The worst problem

(See other side)

YEAS (62)			NAYS (34)			NOT VOTING (4)	
Republicans (50 or 98%)		Democrats (12 or 27%)	Republicans (1 or 2%)		Democrats (33 or 73%)	Republicans (2)	Democrats (2)
Abraham	Hutchison	Baucus	Chafee	Akaka	Johnston	Campbell ⁻²	Nunn ⁻²
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Byrd		Biden	Kennedy	Thomas ⁻²	Pryor ⁻²
Bennett	Jeffords	Conrad		Bingaman	Kerrey		
Bond	Kassebaum	Dorgan		Boxer	Kerry		
Brown	Kempthorne	Exon		Bradley	Kohl		
Burns	Kyl	Harkin		Breaux	Lautenberg		
Coats	Lott	Heflin		Bryan	Levin		
Cochran	Lugar	Hollings		Bumpers	Lieberman		
Cohen	Mack	Leahy		Daschle	Moseley-Braun		
Coverdell	McCain	Mikulski		Dodd	Moynihan		
Craig	McConnell	Robb		Feingold	Murray		
D'Amato	Murkowski	Rockefeller		Feinstein	Pell		
DeWine	Nickles			Ford	Reid		
Domenici	Pressler			Glenn	Sarbanes		
Faircloth	Roth			Graham	Simon		
Frahm	Santorum			Inouye	Wellstone		
Frist	Shelby				Wyden		
Gorton	Simpson						
Gramm	Smith						
Grams	Snowe						
Grassley	Specter						
Gregg	Stevens						
Hatch	Thompson						
Hatfield	Thurmond						
Helms	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

is in the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Program. Immigrants sponsor their parents, and as soon as their parents reach America they sign up for SSI. The abuse is so great that elderly noncitizen immigrants are five times more likely to be on SSI than are elderly American citizens. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the claim that this bill will place an unfunded mandate on State and local governments is false. Just because the Federal Government decides that it will not provide \$18 billion in welfare benefits to immigrants over the next 6 years does not mean that State and local governments will have to provide that money, and we add that they certainly should not. Of course, there is nothing new in these arguments--every Senator is very familiar with this issue, and knows where he or she stands. A majority of Senators have opposed amendments like the Graham amendment in the past. We therefore trust that they will join us in defeating this amendment today.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

The Graham amendment would strike the provisions in this bill that will deny welfare benefits to legal aliens. Those provisions are unduly harsh. The Senate recently considered and passed, after lengthy debate and numerous amendments, an immigration reform bill. We thought that bill, which is now in conference, was too hard on immigrants with its \$5.6 billion reduction in benefits over 7 years. This bill, though, will reduce benefits by \$23 billion over 7 years. We honestly do not understand how Senators could change their opinion so drastically on the appropriate amount to cut welfare for legal aliens in just a few short weeks. It is our opinion that Senators simply do not understand just how harsh the provisions in this bill are. Basically, the cut has quadrupled. The practical effect will be to make the States with the largest number of immigrants--Florida, California, Texas, and New York--pick up the cost of caring for immigrants when they are in need. These States cannot afford to pay for such an enormous unfunded mandate. We urge our colleagues not to make this mistake. We urge them to strike the provisions on legal aliens from this bill in favor of continuing work on the immigration reform bill that is still in conference.